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ACOMART
An African OTT and content champion

ACOMART
THE AFRICA CONTENT MARKETPLACE

Industry
Media & Entertainment

Location
Delaware, United States,
and Lagos, Nigeria

Website
acomart.tv
myafrostream.tv

Solution

Intertrust
ExpressPlay DRM™

Customer profile

ACOMART– Content Acceleration, Aggregation and Monetization Platform

The Africa Content Marketplace (ACOMART) is a global aggregation and distribution platform for Afrocentric movies and series. It is dedicated to transparent promotion of Afrocentric content, targeting a new generation of content producers who believe in telling African stories, and contributing to a prosperous film industry in Africa.

ACOMART runs three distinct but related businesses, of which two are streaming platforms:

- **myafrostream.tv**, a pan-African over-the-top (OTT) subscription video-on-demand (VOD) platform, and the focus of this case study, with over 5,000 hours of movies, series, music videos, lifestyle and entertainment content, offering African content.

- **afrocinema.tv**, a virtual cinema platform for the global release of Afrocentric premium movies, which operates on a pay-per-view (PPV) model.

- **ACOMART** - The Africa Content Marketplace, a platform dedicated to the global equitable promotion and acceleration of Afrocentric content. The company is home to the first ever Virtual Screening Room for African films and series, where content buyers can explore a large catalog of more than 15,000 hours of content.

African OTT market profile

A February 2022 report from Digital TV Research estimates that OTT movie and TV series revenues will reach USD 2 billion by 2027, that is triple the 2021 figure of USD 623 million.

The two largest African markets are South Africa and Nigeria. Together they will consume 56% of the total by 2027, leaving a solid USD 896 million divided between the other 33 countries in the region.

SVOD revenues are set to reach around USD 1.7 billion by 2027, up from USD 476 million in 2021. In terms of subscribers, the region will grow to about 14 million SVOD subscriptions by 2027, up from 5 million at the end of 2021.

The challenge

The ACOMART objective was to launch its new OTT SVOD streaming service called myafrostream.tv. Among the challenges was the goal to make it readily available in most African countries, and to the African diaspora audiences globally, making it accessible on multiple devices while offering the best possible viewing quality. The service would have to compete with well-established SVOD services as provided by local telcos and broadcasters, and global OTT operators like Netflix and HBO Max with ever more competition expected during 2022 and beyond.

To protect its content from the threats of piracy, ACOMART needed a digital rights management (DRM) solution to support the vast array of devices, which typically come with native DRM clients. Different devices would use different DRMs, depending on the OS such as iOS and Android, and this meant ACOMART needed a multi-DRM solution, preferably cloud-based to avoid major upfront (CAPEX) investments in on-premise server farms.

Challenge highlights

- Provide quality Afrocentric content, from popular TV shows to movies and music.

- Ensure the SVOD service would be available on all typical streaming device types, such smart phones, tablets, smart/connected TVs, and Windows/Mac OS platforms.

- Find a cloud-based multi-DRM service that could protect content distribution to a plethora of OTT mobile devices as well as smart/connected TVs.

- Deploy the SVOD service in multiple countries while maintaining the highest video quality and availability: Nigeria ("Nollywood"), Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, and the black diaspora.

- Adapt to various local cultures and languages across the vast African continent: English, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Swahili, and more.

The solution

After a thorough evaluation of multi-DRM options, Intertrust was selected thanks to the global presence of the cloud-based ExpressPlay DRM service that runs on the high-availability Amazon Web Services (AWS) infrastructure. Other important selection factors were the comprehensive compatibility with streaming protocols and codec formats, the easy and straightforward integration requirements, excellent technical support, and the wide range of solutions for media and entertainment companies, including watermarking and anti-piracy services.

ExpressPlay DRM is the only integrated and cloud-based multi-DRM service that supports all major DRMs including Apple FairPlay Streaming, Google Widevine, Microsoft PlayReady, and the long established Marlin DRM. ExpressPlay DRM scales to protect millions of concurrent viewers for major live events with a cost-effective, low-latency and global solution.

ExpressPlay DRM leverages the Secure Packager and Encoder Key Exchange (SPEKE) v2.0 API, which defines the standard for encrypted communication between encoders, origin servers, and DRM systems. The integration enables secure workflows and smooth interoperability with AWS video processing and packaging offerings. The ExpressPlay multi-DRM service is interoperable with AWS Elemental MediaPackage and AWS Elemental MediaConvert.

The results

"While it is early days with our new service, we couldn't be any happier with the support from Intertrust ExpressPlay staff to get this service launched," said Oluwagbemiga Ben-Daniel, Group Chief Executive Officer, ACOMART Media Group based in South Africa. "The experienced team from Intertrust provided the guidance we needed as a new operator with great ambitions," he continued. "We are looking to the future with confidence."

To ease the subscriber acquisition, ACOMART offers OTT streaming video ranging from a single day on a single device, to weekly service with two devices, to a monthly plan with support for three devices. The company also offers Wi-Fi and streaming combos to match the mentioned plans, in cooperation with a local partner.

Thanks to the cloud-based ExpressPlay multi-DRM service running on AWS, OTT operators can enjoy major cost savings by eliminating investment in permanently overprovisioned on-premise server farms, with the ability to instantly serve up large volumes of DRM licenses securely for major live events.

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the connected world.**